THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Airports Authority of India (AAI) is in constant endeavour to operate and upgrade the airports depending upon the requirements of airlines and traffic.

(b) AAI has undertaken the development of Mysore airport in Karnataka and Cooch Behar airport in West Bengal for operation of ATR 42 type of aircraft based on the demand received from Air Deccan and Alliance Air for operation of ATR-42 aircraft.

(c) Does not arise.

Extension of airstrips in Uttaranchal

†3414. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Uttaranchal has sent any proposal to his Ministry for extension of airstrips and to make them operational for regular air services apart from Dehradun Air Strip; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposals sent and whether Airports Authority of India is going to take over the development work of some of Airports of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. State Government of Uttaranchal had sent a proposal to examine the suitability of State Government airstrips at Gauchar, Chinayalisour and Pithoragarh for operation of regular flights. Airports Authority of India (AAI) has carried out the inspection of all these airstrips and have not found the available infrastructure at these airstrips adequate for introduction of civil flights. Inspection Report indicating deficiencies at these airstrips has been sent to the State Government for remedial actions. At present, AAI has no proposal to take over the development works of some of the airports in the State of Uttaranchal.

Refresher courses for Helicopter Pilots

3415. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that in U.S.A., refresher and training courses are compulsory for the Pilots and if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether it is a fact that after the helicopter accident that killed former Lok Sabha Speaker G.M.C. Balyogi, Government decided to hold refresher and training courses for chopper pilots which never took off;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to ensure the safety of passengers travelling in choppers in the light of various crashes that took place during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs) of United States of America stipulate recurrent training for pilots.

(b) to (d) In India, Commercial Helicopter Pilots are required to undergo proficiency checks every six months, which is in accordance with international standards stipulated by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

After the accident in which former Speaker, Lok Sabha was killed, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has revised proficiency check and instrument rating check requirements for all helicopter operators. The revised proficiency check requirements include re-current ground training specific emergency exercise as part of the proficiency check. Guidelines for conducting re-current and emergency exercises during proficiency checks and instrument rating check have also been issued to Instructors/ Examiners.

Anomalies in travel concessions to senior citizens

3416. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Senior Citizens have pointed out gross anomalies in 50 per cent travel concessions being given to them;

(b) if so, the details of anomalies with the reasons for not allowing the usual relief in the event of the patients travelling to seek medical assistance; and

(c) the number of Senior Citizens availed air travel concession on Indian Airlines in the last two years with purpose of travel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No specific representations have been